

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 4399

DEPT PASS TREASURY

LIBREVILLE PASS A/S BERGSTEN AND DAS WALKER

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP, CG
SUBJECT: BERGSTEN VISIT TO ZAIRE: MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER UMBA

1. SUMMARY: DURING MEETING APRIL 28 WITH TREASURY A/S BERGSTEN, AF DAS WALKER AND AMBASSADOR, FOREIGN MINISTER UMBA DI LUTETE COVERED BROAD OUTLINES OF MOBUTU PLAN AND RELATED GOZ EFFORTS TO EFFECT ECONOMIC RECOVERY. UMBA REGRETTED DEGREE OF COOLNESS IN OUR CURRENT BILATERAL RELATIONS, WHICH HE FEARED WOULD BE NOTED BY SOVIETS/CUBANS AND SERVE TO DISCOURAGE OTHER AFRICAN MODERATES WHO LOOKED TO US FOR SUPPORT. BERGSTEN URGED GOZ TO IMPLEMENT REFORMS INCLUDING NEW IMF STABILIZATION PROGRAM AS BEST WAY TO ASSURE THAT RESOURCES NEEDED FOR RECOVERY WOULD BE FORTHCOMING FROM IFIS, PRIVATE BANKS AND USG. IN RESPONSE TO UMBA'S APPEAL FOR UNDERSTANDING OF GOZ'S DIFFICULTIES IN ASSURING HUMAN RIGHTS IN FACE OF NEED FOR PUBLIC ORDER, BERGSTEN
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RECOGNIZED GOZ'S PROBLEMS BUT STRESSED IMPORTANCE OF NOT ONLY GOZ'S COMMITMENT TO HUMAN RIGHTS BUT OF IMPROVED PERFORMANCE OVER TIME. END SUMMARY

2. BERGSTEN EXPLAINED PURPOSE OF HIS VISIT TO ZAIRE, ROLE WHICH TREASURY PLAYS IN FOREIGN POLICY, AND INCREASING US STRESS ON USING IFIS AS MEANS FOR FINANCING DEVELOPMENT. RE ZAIRE, BERGSTEN

RECALLED AND REITERATED PRESIDENT CARTER'S COMMITMENT IN PRINCIPLE TO PARTICIPATE IN MOBUTU PLAN. WE LOOKED FORWARD TO LEARNING MORE ABOUT HOW THE PLAN IS TO BE CARRIED OUT. AN IMPORTANT FIRST STEP WAS CERTAINLY REACHING AGREEMENT WITH IMF ON A NEW STABILIZATION PROGRAM TO SERVE AS THE BASE, OR FRAMEWORK, FOR THE DEVELOPMENT ENVISAGED UNDER MOBUTU PLAN. AS PRESIDENT CARTER HAD INDICATED IN HIS LETTER, CONCLUDING AND IMPLEMENTING STABILIZATION PLAN IS ESSENTIAL FOR OTHER IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OF RECOVERY, SUCH AS PARIS CLUB DEBT RESCHEDULING AND LONDON ACCORD. BERGSTEN RECALLED THAT IN RECENT YEARS ZAIRE HAD TWICE REACHED AGREEMENT ON IMF PROGRAMS BUT FOR VARIETY OF REASONS HAD FAILED TO FULFILL THEM; THIS HISTORY MADE IT ALL THE MORE IMPORTANT THAT THE IMPENDING STABILIZATION PROGRAM BE SIGNED AND CARRIED OUT EXPEDITIOUSLY AND FULLY.

3. UMBA READILY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT FIRST TWO STABILIZATION PROGRAMS HAD FAILED. HE THOUGHT ONE REASON WAS THAT THEIR ONE-YEAR DURATION WAS TOO SHORT; HENCE GOZ HAD PROPOSED THAT NEW PROGRAM BE FOR THREE YEARS WITH YEARLY EVALUATIONS. HE CLAIMED IMF WAS IN GENERAL AGREEMENT WITH THIS CONCEPT. UMBA SAID ANOTHER REASON FOR FAILURE OF PREVIOUS PROGRAMS WAS THAT THEY WERE LIMITED TO STABILIZING THE ECONOMY. THIS TIME, GOZ WANTS TO COUPLE STABILIZATION WITH NEW RESOURCES FOR RECOVERY PROGRAM (I.E., MOBUTU PLAN).

4. BERGSTEN SAID THAT WAS HIS UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT MOBUTU PLAN
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IS: STABILIZATION, IMPROVED MANAGEMENT, NEW RESOURCES. HE EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT ONCE IT IS CLEAR THAT GOZ'S COMMITMENTS TO REFORM AND RECOVERY ARE BEING IMPLEMENTED AND THE MOBUTU PLAN IS ON ITS WAY, ZAIRE WILL HAVE ACCESS TO THE PLENTIFUL RESOURCES NOW AVAILABLE TO THE IFIS AND PRIVATE BANKS. SIMILARLY, THE US WILL AT THAT TIME ALSO BE READY TO DO ITS SHARE BOTH BILATERALLY AND THROUGH THE IFIS.

5. AFTER RECOUNTING SOME OF THE STEPS THE GOZ IS NOW TAKING TO EFFECT RECOVERY (E.G., RECENT DECISIONS TO BRING IN FOREIGN EXPERTS TO RUN CUSTOMS AND RIVER/RAIL TRANSPORTATION), UMBA WENT ON TO STRESS THE IMPORTANCE OF THE US REACTION TO THESE EFFORTS IN THE CONTEXT OF OUR INFLUENCE IN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY. SPEAKING FRANKLY, HE FELT THE US HAD BEEN SOMEWHAT STANDOFFISH WHEREAS OTHERS (E.G., BELGIANS, SAUDIS, CANADIANS) WERE MORE FORTHCOMING EVEN THOUGH ZAIRE'S RELATIONS WITH SOME OF THEM WERE TRADITIONALLY NOT AS CLOSE AS WITH THE US. LAMENTING THE "ATMOSPHERE" THAT SURROUNDED CURRENT US-ZAIRIAN BILATERAL RELATIONS, UMBA SAID WHEN SOVIETS/CUBANS SENSE COOLNESS BETWEEN US THIS CAN ONLY ENCOURAGE THEM TO PURSUE THEIR STRATEGY OF SUBVERTING MODERATES IN AFRICA. OLD FRIENDS OF US IN AFRICA ARE BEGINNING TO FEEL ABANDONED AS WE FAIL TO HELP THEM STAND UP TO

SOVIETS AND CUBANS, AND AS WE PAY INCREASING ATTENTION TO SUCH LEADERS

AS NYERERE AND KAUNDA WHO ARE LESS IMPORTANT AND WHOSE FRIENDSHIP IS LESS RELIABLE.

6. STILL WITHIN CONTEXT OF US-ZAIRIAN BILATERAL RELATIONS, UMBA SHIFTED TO AREA OF HUMAN RIGHTS. HE SAID THAT WHILE GOZ WAS ATTACHED TO PRINCIPLE OF PROTECTING HUMAN RIGHTS, WE MUST UNDERSTAND ZAIRE IS UNDERDEVELOPED, POORLY ORGANIZED COUNTRY WHERE, AT THIS EARLY STAGE OF ITS HISTORY, PUBLIC ORDER MUST BE FIRST PRIORITY. THERE COULD BE NO DEVELOPMENT, HE ASSERTED, IF ANARCHY WERE ALLOWED TO REIGN. IN THIS CONNECTION, HE EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT A REPORT ("MCGOVERN REPORT", HE SAID) HE UNDERSTOOD WAS CIRCULATING IN WASHINGTON CRITICIZING CONDITIONS IN ZAIRE.
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7. BERGSTEN ACKNOWLEDGED THAT HUMAN RIGHTS WAS A FACTOR IN OUR BEING ABLE TO HELP ZAIRE. WE RECOGNIZED ZAIRE HAS MANY PROBLEMS. WE WERE NOT TRYING TO IMPOSE A SET OF ABSOLUTE STANDARDS OF PERFECTION. BUT WE LOOK FOR NOT ONLY A COMMITMENT TO HUMAN RIGHTS BUT ALSO IMPROVEMENT IN PERFORMANCE OVER TIME. HUMAN RIGHTS IS A MAJOR CONSIDERATION FOR THE PRESENT ADMINISTRATION AND WILL REMAIN AN IMPORTANT FACTOR IN OUR ATTITUDES TOWARD OTHER GOVERNMENTS AND OUR ABILITY TO ASSIST THEM. IN ZAIRE'S CASE WE HAVE NOTED COMMITMENTS, AND WE HOPE TO SEE ACTION BASED ON THOSE COMMITMENTS.

8. COMMENT: MEETING, WHICH ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED AS COURTESY CALL, TURNED OUT TO BE HOUR-LONG SUBSTANTIVE EXCHANGE. UMBA'S COMMENTS CLEARLY REFLECTED SOME OF MOBUTU'S PREOCCUPATIONS, NOTABLY THE RESERVE HE PERCEIVES IN US ATTITUDES TOWARD ZAIRE AND OUR APPROACH TO HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS. BERGSTEN'S REMARKS, WHILE FORTHRIGHT AND FRANK, SEEMED TO BE WELL TAKEN BY UMBA, AND HE MOST CERTAINLY PASSED THEM ON FULLY TO MOBUTU PRIOR TO THE LATTER'S MEETING WITH BERGSTEN LATER THE SAME DAY.

9. THIS MESSAGE WAS NOT CLEARED BY BERGSTEN OR WALKER.
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Message Attributes

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